



Building community trust

February 12, 2019

As February begins, the year's activities are well and truly underway across Northern New Mexico (despite the impact of the snowy weather on many of us). The legislative session in Santa Fe is in full swing, with a new governor and many new elected officials.

Here at Los Alamos National Laboratory we have a new Director and new members of the leadership team. As Director Thom Mason stressed in [his remarks in December](#), sustaining and enhancing the Laboratory's partnerships with the regional community is one of the key areas of focus for the new team.

Speaking to the [Albuquerque Journal's editorial board](#) recently, he expanded on this, stressing the importance of trust and engagement with New Mexico communities.

"If you lose the trust and confidence of the communities in which you're located, you'll find pretty quickly that you can't get anything done, because you lose the support that you need," he said.

One of the steps Mason identified as important in building trust was to share as much information as possible about activities at the Laboratory, while acknowledging that some classified information cannot be disclosed.

"I can answer your question truthfully and I'm going to give you all the information I can," he said.

Creating a path to employment

Helping New Mexicans fill the many projected vacancies at the Laboratory is another focus area for the new management. The Lab is currently hiring around 1,000 new employees a year to replace retiring workers and work on growing programs.

Around 75 percent of the Laboratory workforce are employed in positions that do not require a doctorate degree, including operations jobs and well-paid technicians. Working with New Mexico educational institutions to create pathways for recruiting to all positions will be a priority for the Lab and will be coordinated by the newly-created Office of Partnerships and Pipeline.

Looking forward to new opportunities in the year to come at the Laboratory and across the state, I would like to echo the Director's commitment to collaboration and transparency as the Lab works together with regional on economic and workforce development issues, education initiatives and a range of philanthropic projects.

—Kathy Keith

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